IV. E. 4. PROGRAM DIRECTOR CHANGES

NOTIFICATION OF PROGRAM DIRECTOR CHANGE

A requirement for maintaining accreditation is that prompt notification be sent to the AOTA Accreditation Department if the program director of an accredited occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program changes. (Programs must inform ACOTE within 30 days of the resignation of the program director or appointment of a new or interim program director.) If the position is vacant, written notification should include the plan for filling the position and the name, credentials, and contact information of the individual who will serve as the primary point of contact for the program.

Upon the appointment of an acting or permanent program director or individual who is primarily responsible for handling the duties of the program director, the following documentation must be submitted to ACOTE c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department at the following e-mail address: accred@aota.org.

1. A letter of appointment, including the effective date of appointment of the new program director or the individual who is primarily responsible for handling the duties of the program director.

2. A completed Program Director Data Form available in the "Policies and Procedures (ACOTE Manual)" section of the ACOTE Web site (www.acoteonline.org).

3. The curriculum vitae of the new program director or the individual who is primarily responsible for covering the duties of the program director. The curriculum vitae should detail occupational therapy experience, and should give particular attention to experience and qualifications in clinical practice, administration, and teaching.

4. A summary of experience and qualifications that is pertinent to the *ACOTE Accreditation Standards.* See the "Summary of Program Director Credentials" form in the "Accreditation Surveys, Forms, and Templates" section of the ACOTE Web site (www.acoteonline.org).

ACOTE REVIEW OF PROGRAM DIRECTOR CREDENTIALS

The assigned Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) reviewers will assess the information and determine compliance with the relevant ACOTE Standards as follows:

Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist

A.2.1. *The program must identify an individual as the program director who is assigned to the occupational therapy educational program on a full-time basis. The director may be assigned other institutional duties that do not interfere with the management and administration of the program. The institution must document that the program director has sufficient release time to ensure that the needs of the program are being met.*

A.2.2. *The program director must be an initially certified occupational therapist who is licensed or otherwise regulated according to regulations in the state(s) or jurisdiction(s) in which the program is located. The program director must hold a doctoral degree awarded by an institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The doctoral degree is not limited to a doctorate in occupational therapy.*

A.2.3. *The program director must have a minimum of 8 years of documented experience in the field of occupational therapy. This experience must include*

- *Clinical practice as an occupational therapist;*

- *Administrative experience including, but not limited to, program planning and implementation, personnel management, evaluation, and budgeting;*
- *Scholarship (e.g., scholarship of application, scholarship of teaching and learning); and*
- *At least 3 years of experience in a full-time academic appointment with teaching responsibilities at the postbaccalaureate level.*

Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist

A.2.1. *The program must identify an individual as the program director who is assigned to the occupational therapy educational program on a full-time basis. The director may be assigned other institutional duties that do not interfere with the management and administration of the program. The institution must document that the program director has sufficient release time to ensure that the needs of the program are being met.*

A.2.2. *The program director must be an initially certified occupational therapist who is licensed or otherwise regulated according to regulations in the state(s) or jurisdiction(s) in which the program is located. The program director must hold a doctoral degree awarded by an institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The doctoral degree is not limited to a doctorate in occupational therapy.*

A.2.3. *The program director must have a minimum of 8 years of documented experience in the field of occupational therapy. This experience must include*
- *Clinical practice as an occupational therapist;*
- *Administrative experience including, but not limited to, program planning and implementation, personnel management, evaluation, and budgeting;*
- *Scholarship (e.g., scholarship of application, scholarship of teaching and learning); and*
- *At least 3 years of experience in a full-time academic appointment with teaching responsibilities at the postsecondary level.*

Associate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant

A.2.1. *The program must identify an individual as the program director who is assigned to the occupational therapy educational program on a full-time basis. The director may be assigned other institutional duties that do not interfere with the management and administration of the program. The institution must document that the program director has sufficient release time to ensure that the needs of the program are being met.*

A.2.2. *The program director must be an initially certified occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant who is licensed or otherwise regulated according to regulations in the state(s) or jurisdiction(s) in which the program is located. The program director must hold a minimum of a master's degree awarded by an institution that is accredited by a regional or national accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The master's degree is not limited to a master's degree in occupational therapy.*

A.2.3. *The program director must have a minimum of 5 years of documented experience in the field of occupational therapy. This experience must include*
- *Clinical practice as an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant;*
- *Administrative experience including, but not limited to, program planning and implementation, personnel management, evaluation, and budgeting;*
- *Understanding of and experience with occupational therapy assistants; and*
- *At least 1 year of experience in a full-time academic appointment with teaching responsibilities at the postsecondary level.*

If review of credentials for a director of an established occupational therapy educational program reveals compliance with the Standards, no further action is taken. If the credentials indicate noncompliance and ACOTE agrees, an area of noncompliance will be cited and the program will be required to submit a Plan of Correction to ACOTE.